NWT Hospital Satisfaction Questionnaire

Inuvik

Northwest Territories Health and Social Services

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OVERVIEW

In the fall of 2003, the Joint Senior Management Committee (JSMC) began to formalize a process of evaluating consumer's satisfaction with the health and social services system. The project was a collaborative effort between the Department of Health and Social Services and the Authorities as part of their ongoing commitment to evaluation and quality assurance. It also addressed Action Plan Item 5.1.4 - a commitment by the Minister of Health and Social Services to conduct a client satisfaction survey.

JSMC felt it would be best to get feedback from persons using two distinct parts of the system - hospitals and community health centres/social services offices.

In order to address these distinct parts of the system, two different questionnaires and collection methods were used. The Northwest Territories (NWT) Hospital Satisfaction Questionnaire was developed to help measure consumer's satisfaction with the four hospitals in the NWT, while the Community Health and Social Services Client Feedback Form was provided at health centres and social services offices.

This report focuses on the results of the NWT Hospital Satisfaction Questionnaire and is specific to the hospital in Inuvik.

PROJECT METHODOLOGY AND DATA LIMITATIONS

A hospital satisfaction working group was established with a project lead from the Department of Health and Social Services and representatives selected by the Chief Executive Officers from each hospital. In consultation with senior management, hospital staff, the NWT Bureau of Statistics and staff from the Department of Health and Social Services, the working group finalized the NWT Hospital Satisfaction Questionnaire.

It was recognized early in the process that budget and human resource constraints limited the choices available for the questionnaire methodology. A self-administered questionnaire was the only option available given these constraints. Recognizing that self-administered questionnaires have lower response rates than telephone and/or in-person interviews by trained interviewers, the working group concentrated efforts of getting buy-in and cooperation from front-line hospital staff for questionnaire distribution.

The NWT Hospital Satisfaction Questionnaire was distributed at the four hospitals in the Northwest Territories during the month of October 2004. Patients were provided a questionnaire and encouraged to complete it by front-line hospital staff. Completed questionnaires were returned to the Department where data entry, analysis and the final reports were completed.

The voluntary and self-administered methodology of the questionnaire resulted in valuable feedback from those who responded to the questionnaire, but does not necessarily provide a representative sample.

The limitation of using a questionnaire with a volunteer bias, rather than a randomly selected representative sample, is data from each hospital must be approached with caution, response rates cannot be calculated and the data cannot be calculated from a territorial perspective.

The findings from these questionnaires can be used to:

- provide feedback to senior management and hospital staff;
- recognize areas that are working well;
- indicate areas of improvement;

- provide a component of the hospital accreditation process;
- serve as baseline data for future client satisfaction measurements.

A total of 282 completed questionnaires were received from people utilizing the hospital in Inuvik during the month of October.

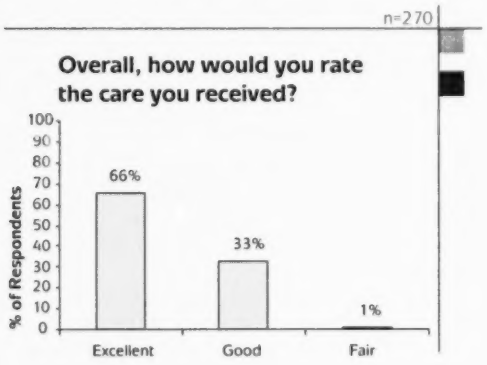
The majority of respondents provided ratings of excellent or good for *every* question asked on the Hospital Satisfaction Questionnaire.

Similarly, the majority of comments provided by respondents were also positive. In Inuvik, 164 respondents (58%) provided comments on their questionnaires.

MEASURES OF HOSPITAL SATISFACTION

OVERALL SATISFACTION

The question that asked, **"Overall, how would you rate the care you received?"** provides a concise summary of the overall findings of the NWT Hospital Satisfaction questionnaire. The vast majority of respondents provided ratings of excellent or good - a clear indication of their satisfaction with the services provided at the hospital.



- A total of 270 respondents provided ratings for this question (n=270).
- Approximately 99% of respondents rated the overall care they received as good or excellent and 1% said fair.

The following quote summarizes the general findings of the NWT Hospital Questionnaire in Inuvik and the high level of satisfaction:

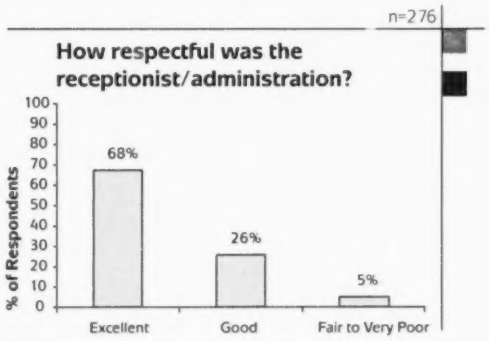
> *As always, there is room for improvement, but I can honestly say just keep on with what you are doing. With your present staff, you have what it takes - the right stuff.*

Italics in this report indicate comments taken directly from the questionnaires. To protect anonymity of either the respondent or hospital staff, deletions have been indicated with the use of square brackets []. Additions for clarity of quotes have also been noted with the use of square brackets.

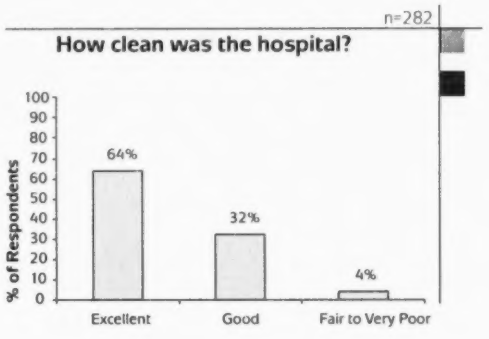
Some percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

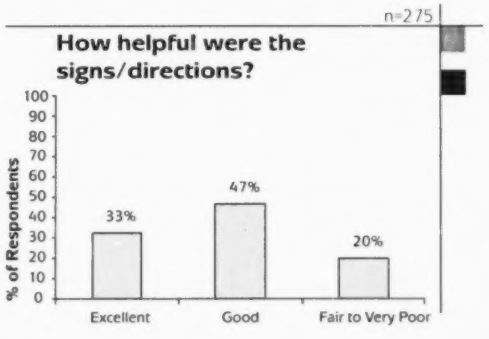
This section of the questionnaire asked five questions dealing with general services related to the hospital.



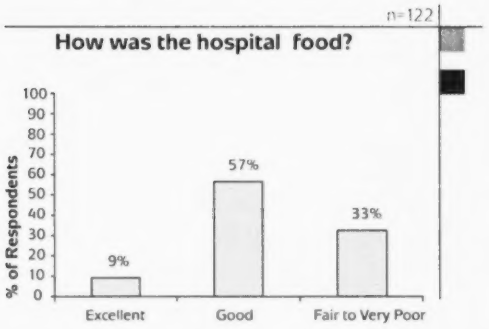
- 94% of respondents rated respectfulness as good or excellent. Positive comments related to reception included it being friendly and helpful.
- Fair to very poor ratings were given by 5% of respondents.



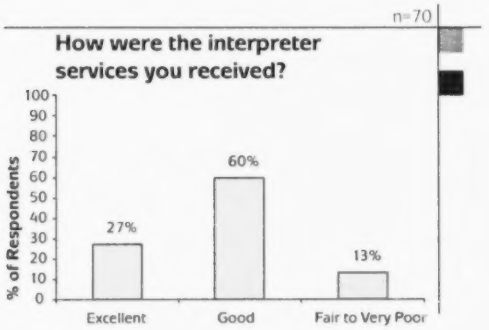
- Only 4% of respondents rated cleanliness as fair to very poor while 96% of respondents rated cleanliness as good or excellent.



- 80% of respondents said the signs/directions were good or excellent.
- 20% stated the signage was fair to very poor. Comments suggesting improvement included the need for more signs, a guide to the abbreviations and colour coding on the wall or floor.



- 33% of respondents rated the hospital food as fair to very poor - the lowest level of satisfaction on the questionnaire. Comments reflecting these lower ratings included suggestions for more country and healthier food choices.
- However, when excellent or good responses are combined, 66% of respondents were satisfied with the hospital food.

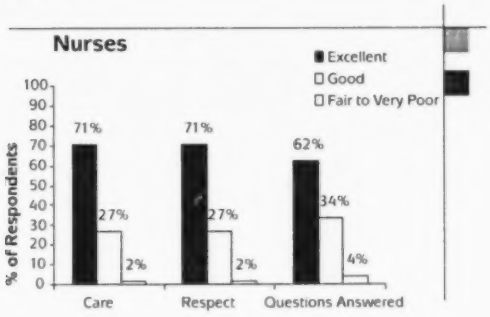


- 87% of respondents said the interpreter services were good or excellent while 13% said the services were fair or very poor.

HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

The Health Care Provider section of the questionnaire was divided into to three types of health care providers: nurses, doctors and specialized health care providers. Similar questions were asked of each type of health care provider.

Nurses



- The high level of respondent satisfaction with nurses was evident in the three questions directly related to nursing.
- Questions relating to care, respect and how the nurses answered questions all received good or excellent ratings of 96% or higher.

What do you think about the care you received from the nurses?

A total of 176 respondents provided ratings for this question.

Many positive comments reflected the 98% of respondents who rated the nursing care as good or excellent. These included comments about the helpfulness, friendliness and professionalism of nurses.

A few comments were reflective of the 2% of the respondents who said the nursing care was fair or poor and suggested that the attitude of some nurses needed improvement.

How respectful were the nurses?

A total of 174 respondents provided ratings for this question.

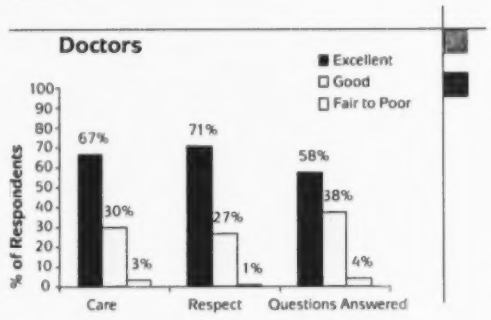
Similar to the care provided by nurses, the ratings for respect were 98% of respondents saying good or excellent and 2% said fair to very poor.

How well did the nurses answer your questions?

A total of 170 respondents provided ratings for this question.

In response to how well the nurses answered questions, 96% of respondents said good or excellent and 4% said fair.

Doctors



- Respondents also indicated good or excellent ratings of 96% or higher for the three questions directly related to doctors.

What do you think about the care you received from the doctors?

A total of 178 respondents provided ratings for this question.

The majority of comments related to the care provided by doctors reflected the 97% of respondents who said good or excellent. For example: *Genuine caring doctors.*

How respectful were the doctors?

A total of 182 respondents provided ratings for this question.

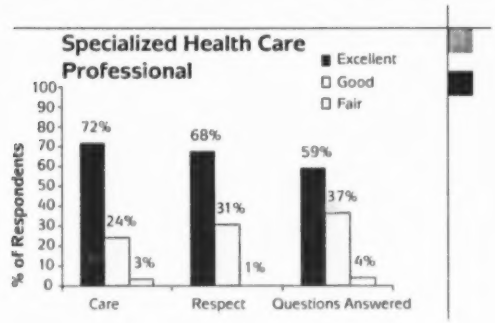
98% of respondents rated the respectfulness of the doctors as good or excellent.

How well did the doctors answer your questions?

A total of 181 respondents provided ratings for this question.

4% of respondents rated the doctors answering their questions as fair and 96% providing good or excellent ratings.

Specialized Care (For example: blood work, x-ray, physiotherapy, stress test etc.)



- Similar to the questions on the care, respect and how well nurses and doctors answered questions, specialized care providers in Inuvik also received very high ratings of satisfaction from respondents.

What do you think about the care you received from the specialized care professional (for example, the lab technologist who drew your blood, the physiotherapist)?

A total of 232 respondents provided ratings for this question.

The question on care provided by the specialized care professionals received the highest excellent rating of the questionnaire - 72%.

Many comments reflected the 96% of respondents who rated the care from specialized care professionals as good or excellent. Some were general comments: Good all around - friendly and helpful. Other comments were specific to the service area.

How respectful were the specialized health care professionals?

A total of 238 respondents provided ratings for this question.

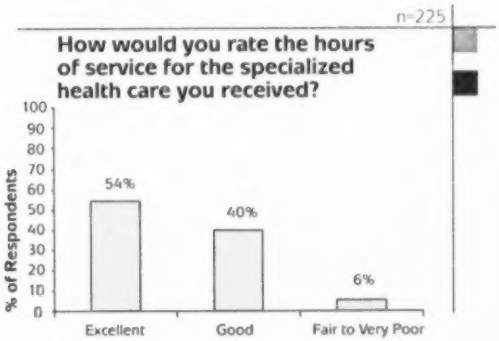
99% of respondents rated the respectfulness of the specialized health care professionals as excellent or good.

How well did the specialized health care professionals answer your questions?

A total of 231 respondents provided ratings for this question.

96% of respondents rated the answering of their questions by specialized health care professionals as good or excellent.

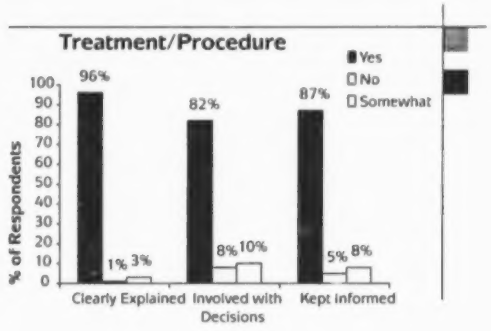
Respondents were also asked, **"How would you rate the hours of service for the specialized health care you received?"**



- 94% of respondents rated the hours of service for specialized health care as good or excellent.

TREATMENT/PROCEDURE

The questionnaire asked respondents three questions related to their treatment/procedure.



- The vast majority of respondents (82% or higher) indicated that their treatments/procedures were clearly explained, that they were involved in the decisions affecting their care and that they were kept informed about the care planned for them.

Was your treatment/procedure clearly explained to you?

A total of 216 respondents provided ratings for this question.

Only 1% of respondents said their treatment/procedure was not clearly explained, with 99% saying yes or somewhat.

Were you involved in decisions affecting your care?

A total of 197 respondents provided ratings for this question.

A slightly higher number of respondents felt they were not involved in decisions affecting their care - 8%.

Were you kept informed about the care planned for you?

A total of 197 respondents provided ratings for this question.

95% of respondents responded yes or somewhat on being kept informed about the care planned for them.

FEEDBACK

The NWT Hospital Satisfaction Questionnaire asked two open-ended questions to gather more detailed information from respondents:

- **Tell us about the things we are doing well; and**
- **Tell us about the areas in which we could improve.**

Comment sections were also provided following the General, Health Care Providers and Treatment/Procedure sections and at the end of the questionnaire. In Inuvik, 164 respondents (58%) provided comments on their questionnaires. Some respondents provided multiple comments in more than one section of the questionnaire; therefore the count of comments exceeds 164.

The following is a summary of the comments provided by respondents using the hospital in Inuvik.

Tell us about the things we are doing well:

The highest number of comments were related to staff. Approximately 127 comments, or 42% of the 302 positive comments, directly or indirectly praised the staff at the hospital.

Indirect praise or general comments towards staff included things such as:

Great staff - they care.

Respect for patients is obvious. You listen well and answer questions and you seek other's help when necessary.

"Friendly", "professional", "knowledgeable", "caring" and "helpful" were common phrases used to describe staff.

Praise was also directed towards staff in specific service areas as well as towards specific staff members. Respondents included the names of individual nurses, doctors and specialized health care professionals in noting exceptional service.

Respondents also provided general comments on the service they received. Positive praise were reflected in the 91 comments such as:

Excellent service.

Everything is good!

Good communication was another area in which respondents felt the hospital was doing well (27 comments). These comments included respondents appreciating the care displayed by staff during their visit:

They treat you one on one and try to understand what you're feeling and going through.

Communication was also praised in relation to the medical care the respondent received:

Was kept updated on procedure step-by-step. Very interesting and makes you feel you're part of the team.

Respondents also noted wait times and efficiency in 22 comments. These included appreciation for the availability of appointments, prompt service and walk-in service. One respondent wrote:

Follow-up is very professional and as timely as possible. Thank you.

The facility was singled out for praise in 14 different comments. This included notes about its cleanliness, maintenance and comments such as:

Nice landscaping in front of hospital.

Save the bright colors!

Positive comments specific to treatment or the procedure they received were noted by 10 comments. For example:

I feel confident I was getting quality treatment by a professional.

Other positive comments (11 in total) were directed towards various areas including the hospital food, administration and health care in general. Examples of these miscellaneous comments included:

Providing health workers that are from our area. Good to see familiar faces.

I am very impressed with the service I received at IRH. It is much better than ANY southern hospital I have been to.

NWT health care plan is second to none. I have a great respect for it and say a big thank you.

Tell us about the areas in which we could improve:

Cited most often under the need for improvement were comments directed towards staff. These represented 20% of all suggestions for improvement (24 of the 123 comments). The comments were primarily directed towards suggestions related to attitude, for example:

Courteous - should be done all the time not only when a survey is being done!

Comments were also provided with concerns about confidentiality. These comments related to staff members talking about patients within hearing distance of other patients, keeping chart information confidential and the physical layout of the hospital.

In the 19 comments related to the need for improvements within the facility, some suggested the process and physical layout for admitting was confusing and did not facilitate confidentiality. An additional 7 comments were directed towards the need for improved cleanliness at the hospital.

A total of 15 comments were directed towards improving the signage and directions within the hospital. One respondent wrote:

Put up signs so we don't have to ask where we are all the time.

Improved communication was indicated in 15 comments. Suggestions included improving communication between departments, ensuring the patient clearly understands and keeping the patient better informed. For example:

Need more explanation when going to see a specialist - what to expect and what they may do.

Waiting times were addressed in 10 comments. These included the need to improve the length of time to get an appointment, to receive test results and for appointments to start at the set time. Interconnected with wait times, 5 comments suggested the need for more staff.

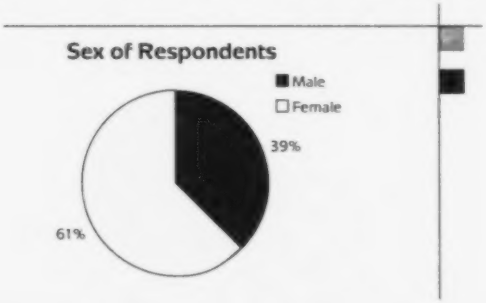
Another 10 comments suggested the food could be improved at the hospital including the desire to see more country food as well as healthier food choices.

Comments were also provided suggesting improved hours (2 comments), more tests to detect the medical problem (4 comments), improved medical procedures (2 comments) and miscellaneous comments (7) such as:

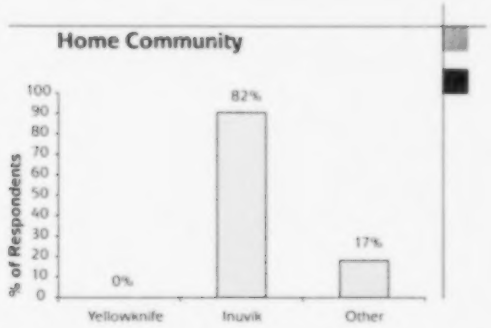
Meet the staff fun day or evening.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographic questions were asked to provide more detailed analysis and comparisons of questionnaire responses where applicable. The demographic also provided information on the 282 respondents who completed questionnaires in Inuvik.



- Respondents were asked for their sex, home community, ethnicity and age.
- A total of 269 respondents indicated whether they were male or female.



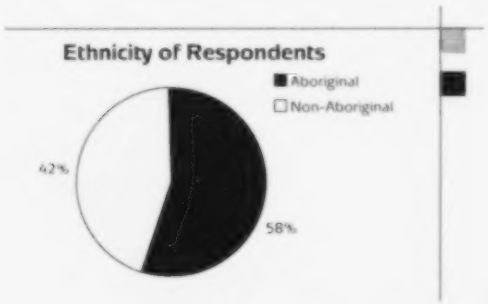
- The majority of respondents were from Inuvik.
- A total of 267 respondents provided their home community.

The high non-response rate for the question on ethnicity indicates the sensitivity of this issue - 77 respondents (27%) did not indicate if they were Aboriginal/Non-Aboriginal.

Some respondents provided comments directly on the questionnaire indicating their reasoning behind leaving the question blank:

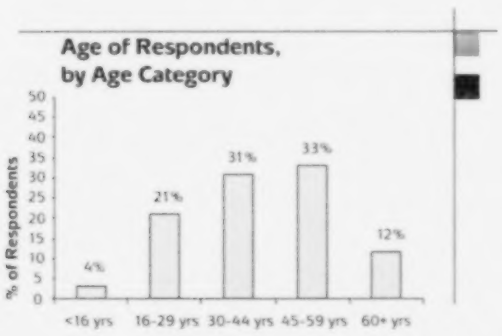
I refuse to answer questions that discriminate based on race.

I am Canadian!



- A total of 205 respondents indicated their ethnicity.

The original intent of the questionnaire was to be distributed to people 16 years and older. Questionnaires were received where the age completed was under 16. In some cases, parents completed the questionnaire on behalf of a child receiving the hospital services and put in the child's age (for example 1 year old).



- All completed questionnaires were included in the analysis.
- Excluding the under 16 age category, the average age of respondents was 43 years.
- The age ranged to 89 years old.
- A total of 257 respondents indicated their age.

CONCLUSION

The NWT Hospital Satisfaction Questionnaire asked respondents general questions relating to reception/administration, hospital cleanliness, signage, hospital food and interpreter services. Respondents also provided ratings relating to the care, respect and communication experienced in their treatment/procedure and dealings with health care professionals.

In all of these sections of the questionnaire - General, Health Care Providers and Treatment/Procedure - the majority of the 282 total respondents were satisfied with the care they received from the hospital in Inuvik. This satisfaction was reflected in the fact that 99% of respondents said that overall, the care they received was excellent or good.

The majority of comments provided by respondents also reflected the quality of service provided. Hospital staff in particular received numerous comments praising their professionalism and caring attitudes. While some respondents offered suggestions for change and the need for improvement, the majority of comments reflected the high levels of satisfaction found in every question.